

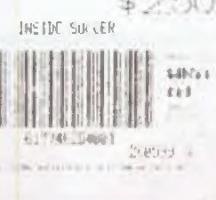
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FOOTBALL WINS



Sydney United versus South Melbourne: it is the football classic that everybody wanted

AUSTRALIAN soccer got the Grand Final that nearly every one wanted when Sydney United overcame a strangely lacklustre Perth Glory in the Preliminary Final at Marconi Stadium on Sunday.

That has set up a meeting of first and second, although League Premiers United had to do it the hard way after being beaten over two legs by defending champions South Melbourne.

United coach Davie Mitchell has no intentions of being the bridesmaid and will take his own brand

of something old, something new, and something borrowed and, in his case, something red to Olympic Park next Sunday.

His mixture of State Leaguers, veterans, cast-offs and kids has performed wonders this season and he could well be on the threshold of a notable Grand Final victory.

Standing in Sydney United's way is South Melbourne, the pedigree side of the current season.

The Blues have got their own share of magic and in skipper Paul Trimboli arguably the finest player in

by Bruce Campbell

Australian soccer.

Trimboli is backed with class like keeper Michael Petkovic, having an outstanding season, and midfielder David Clarkson.

Clarkson missed the second leg of the semi final after a tragic car accident involving his two daughters.

But he is almost certain to be involved in South's Grand Final side and he could well be the match winner if he is on form.

But it could well be a soccer clas-

sic with both sides having outstanding attacking line-ups.

With finals in recent years tending to fade into boredom it is inconceivable that this match will be anything other than a cracker.

Both sides will have to attack right from the start with the early goal even more important in a game which will be decided on the day.

Should the game be drawn at the end of normal regulation time then it will go into sudden death extra time.

After that a penalty shoot-out will decide the champion of Australia - if necessary.

And other than the plaudits of Australian soccer, the Championship trophy and substantial cash prize, the winner will also represent Australia in the Oceania leg of the qualifier for the inaugural FIFA World Club Championship.

It is the classic contest of two sides committed to all out attacking football and for once Australia football has won - no more who is crowned champion come five o'clock next Sunday at Melbourne's Olympic Park.

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Vieri heads up overseas stars set for Sydney

By Ted Simmons

ITALIAN striker Christian Vieri (pictured) heads the first group of overseas players confirmed to take part in the FIFA international against the Socceroos at Stadium Australia next month.

FIFA announced seven players in its first group with another eight players verbally agreeing but yet to be confirmed.

Vieri will be joined by Jürgen Klinsmann (Germany), George Weah (Liberia), Leonardo (Brazil), Julio Cesar (Brazil), Bernard Lama (France) and Wynton Rufer (New Zealand).

Those yet to be finalised are Marcel Desailly

(France), Youn Djorkaeff (France), Jorge Campos (Mexico), Rigobert Song (Cameroon), Aaron Winter (Holland), Taribo West (Nigeria), Andrei Schevchenko (Ukraine) and Hakan Sukur (Turkey).

Australian coach Raul Blanco said FIFA had incredible talent available for the match which will be the official opening event for the main Olympic stadium.

He said: "FIFA might have some stars not available but the team will still be strong."

"There is unbelievable talent and it doesn't matter who comes.

"I can't find anyone there I don't like."

But the available talent

for Australia slipped with news that gifted midfielder Paul Okon could miss the game because of a possible broken bone in his leg.

Blanco will find out the full extent of the injury when he contacts Okon, who has been plagued by injury problems during his career.

Okon was expected to travel to Birmingham with the Lazio squad to contest the European Cup Winners' Cup final against Real Mallorca until the injury occurred.

The Socceroos will not be called to camp until one week before the FIFA match.

"Some of them are still playing in Europe but the majority of players will

come home except those travelling with clubs on tour," Blanco said.

"That will be a bonus for the team because they'll still be active and won't have a long break.

"Most of the overseas players need a short break to recharge their batteries.

"They will then have to return to pre-season training with their clubs to get ready for the start of the next season whereas the local Australian players will have been out of action for up to four months.

"At this stage, my concentration is on the FIFA game.

"After that, I'll see



who's available and start working on the (two) Manchester United matches in July."

Blanco has been in constant contact with the overseas-based Australians and said there had been a big response to

availability for the FIFA and United matches.

He said he had decided to recall the players when the time arose and wanted to allow them a breather, considering the number of matches played in the European

competitions.

He added: "I'll see what I need to strengthen the team.

"I know what we have available and I'm confident we'll have the strongest side possible."

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Hodgson still looms as Socceroo candidate

IT seems that Roy Hodgson's name is to be indelibly linked with Australian soccer and the vacant national team coach's job until Soccer Australia makes a final appointment.

Rumours emanating from Paddington are split on who will land the big job - Sydney United's Scottish born coach Davie Mitchell or Englishman Roy Hodgson.

South Melbourne coach Angie Postecoglou is also a much favoured front runner.

And while Mitchell remains the people's fa-

vourite even those within the corridors of power who also back him are aware of the big push for Hodgson.

Australian soccer officials will get another chance to woo the Englishman with his appointment to the coaching staff of the FIFA All Stars team.

Hodgson has been one of the favourite for the job, being filled on an interim basis by Raul Blanco since the end of Terry Venables' spell in charge of the national team.

Hodgson is currently caretaker coach of

giant Italian club Inter Milan, with its season just finished.

He then gets to guide the cream of world talent in the FIFA All Stars team which plays the Socceroos on June 12 in a game to officially open Sydney's Olympic Stadium.

Hodgson earned international acclaim for getting Switzerland into the 1994 World Cup finals and coached England's Blackburn Rovers after his first spell at Inter.

But it seems that Hodgson's reputation has been built largely on that iso-

lated success.

Since then success at the top level has eluded him and in recent seasons

he has failed with both

Inter Milan and Black-

burn Rovers.

He resigned from the Blackburn manager's job in the face of massive public outrage after the former English champions slumped to bottom place in the English Premier League.

Hodgson's detractors in

Australia point to the fact

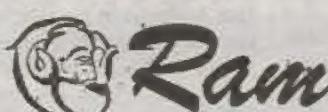
that he has not won a

major trophy in football

despite having the backing of two football millionaires.

Neither has he an illustrious playing background and prior to his four year spell in charge of the Swiss national team he was largely anonymous in the world of football.

Sydney United coach Dave Mitchell is recognised as the leading local candidate for the national job, with the money required to lure Hodgson seen as a factor in the local's favour.



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BAHRAIN MATCHES OFF

DUE TO Bahrain's inability to field a team for the Under-17 World Championship Qualifiers on Saturday, May 22, 1999 in Canberra and on Friday, June 4, 1999 in Bahrain the matches had been deferred.

FIFA are now seeking alternative dates suitable to both Soccer Australia and the Bahrain Football Association.

Soccer Australia Chief Executive David Woolley said: "We are very disappointed with the decision handed down by FIFA. Soccer Australia has adhered to the original dates communicated by FIFA on 11 March, and this deferral clearly has an adverse affect on our preparations."

FACTFILE
ROY HODGSON

Born - August 9 1947

Playing career (1965-75):
Crystal Palace
Maidstone Utd
Berea Park (South Africa).

Honours: None.

Managerial career:
Halmstad (Sweden, 1976-80) - two championships.

Bristol City (1982) - stepped up from assistant manager to Bob Houghton and was in charge for 27 games until club were relegated to old Fourth Division.

Taken on by Orebro in Sweden.

Moved to Malmö (1985-90) - five consecutive championships, two Swedish Cups.

Neuchatel Xamax, Switzerland (1990-92).

Swiss national team (1992-1996) - in 1994 they qualified for first World Cup finals in 28 years and qualified for Euro 96.

Inter Milan, Italy, (1995-1997). Seventh in Serie A in 1995-96, UEFA Cup finalists 1996-97.

Blackburn Rovers (1997-1998). Joined in June, Blackburn finished the season sixth and qualified for UEFA Cup. Knocked out in first round of

UEFA Cup in September 1998 and went bottom of English premier league in November. Hodgson resigned that month.

Inter Milan (April 1999) - Returned as technical director.

FIFA opens World Cup door for North Korea

WORLD soccer's governing body FIFA is open to the possibility of North Korea staging matches in the 2002 World Cup finals, which will be jointly hosted by Japan and South Korea, FIFA president Sepp Blatter said at the weekend.

"We are always open to any possible solution, as I have said to the head of state of the Republic of (South) Korea," Blatter told a news conference.

He said a North Korean sports official had verbally invited him last October to visit the country in autumn this year but seven months had elapsed with no official confirmation of an invitation.

"So far we have not received any official invitation or information from the northern part of Korea," Blatter said.

He said he expected to meet North Korean soccer officials in June when North Korea participates in the FIFA women's World Cup or in July at a FIFA extraordinary congress.

Both events take place in the United States.

And in other news FIFA has signed a three-year sponsorship deal with Hyundai Mo-



Sepp Blatter: the FIFA boss has opened the door for North Korea and also signed up a lucrative sponsorship deal with Hyundai

tors Co.

Neither side would say how much money was involved.

But Hyundai, South Korea's No. 1 auto maker, said it will

provide FIFA with 2,000 to 2,500 cars for official use during 13 FIFA competitions in the next three years, including the 2002 World Cup finals to be hosted by Japan and South Korea.

The competitions also in-

clude the Women's World Cup, World Youth Championships, Confederations Cup and U-17 tournaments.

Under the deal signed in Seoul with FIFA President Sepp Blatter, Hyundai Motors gets two perimeter advertising boards in each stadium during those competitions.

It also has the exclusive right to use the FIFA logo in advertising its cars.

WILKINSON QUILTS GLORY

BY Jason Marocchi

NEW Zealand international Gavin Wilkinson has been released by Perth Glory, with one year still to run on his contract.

The club has agreed to cancel Wilkinson's contract so he can seek opportunities elsewhere.

Wilkinson, Glory's best and fairest winner in its inaugural season, has seen limited playing time under coach Bernd Stange, since the signings of defenders Craig Deans and Gianfranco Circati.

After starting the first 15 games of the season, Wilkinson played in only 7 of the



remaining 13 games, and has not been included in Stange's plans for the NSL finals.

His last appearance was in Glory's Round 30 trip to Brandon Park, more than one month ago.

Wilkinson will stay in Perth until he leaves for Mexico next month, to take part in the Confederations Cup with New Zealand.

NSL new boys Auckland Kings are the favourite to snap up Wilkinson's signature next season.

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Sharks on the rocks, Falcons under administration, Parramatta on the sidelines what once looked likely to be a settling format for next season is turning into

NSL CHAOS

by BRUCE CAMPBELL

IT WAS a week when the future format of the National Soccer League was starting to take shape according to expectations – and then all of a sudden it was almost back to the drawing board.

It had widely been expected that the admission of Auckland Kings into next season's competition would be backed up by at least one other club – with the bid from Sydney's Parramatta Leagues Club likely to be the one that got the nod.

That would make 17 teams if the status quo remained, and would clearly be one team too many.

Favoured for the chop were the financially troubled Gippsland Falcons and that took a step closer to happening when they appointed an administrator last week to handle their financial woes.

The club has teetered on the brink of financial despair almost since day one and current estimates of their indebtedness are somewhere in the region of \$3million.

A string of staff changes at the administrative level was further indication of just how bad the club was.

When Stuart Munro left the Morwell side for Carlton two weeks ago the die looked to be cast.

And last week Colin McDonald of chartered accounting firm Horwath Partnership took charge of the club.

McDonald is at the Falcons after an extraordinary meeting of members on Wednesday night moved to solve the long running crisis.

Officials of Gippsland are still confident that the club will survive.

"We had to do this after our big meeting," president Fred Di Sipio told the *Herald Sun*.

"It will give the club a clean slate and allow new investors to come in knowing the club is not carrying any baggage.

"There are investors interested, but they would not come in under our previous structure.

"The meeting on Wednesday changed the membership structure to introduce an executive made up of people who have business expertise

Di Sipio succeeded Don di Fabrizio at the helm of the Falcons but has been frequently criticised by club supporters for failing to use his own personal wealth to save the club's problems.

"What is the point of him being involved with the club if he won't dip his hand into his pocket when things are tough," a club insider told *Inside Soccer*.

"He has got the reputation of being mean and it looks like it is a deserved one."

"He certainly doesn't sit at the top of the board for any outstanding football knowledge.

"It is common knowledge with the players that when they travel they do so on a budget economy level – particularly when he is with them."

The stinging personal attack on Di Sipio comes as he has vowed to step aside to let the potential new investors come into the Falcons.

"The meeting on Wednesday changed the membership structure to introduce an executive made up of people who have business expertise

and are prepared to make a financial commitment," administrator Colin McDonald told the *Herald Sun*.

"My role is to maintain the status quo and deal with creditors.

"I'm basically putting out fires, but the fires appear to be minimal."

"The administration period is 28 days, but it can be extended."

"As yet I don't know the extent of the debts."

"Once I know that and the money I have to play with, I will look at arrangements that can be made with creditors."

Gippsland Falcons have admitted that it owes money to players, staff, fans and members as well as secured and unsecured creditors.

While the Falcons are looking to fight their way out of trouble their financial mess could be the easy excuse that Soccer Australia needs to make way for Parramatta which has pledged an immediate budget of \$5million.

And as expected the takeover of Newcastle-Breakers has been completed with new owner David Hall set to tackle

SA on the issue of the \$250,000 franchise fee.

But with Carlton and Auckland having already been billed, he looks to have little chance.

Hall has stated his belief in the talent currently existing in the Newcastle area which might mean another lean period for local fans who were hoping that his arrival would see the club buy some top talent.

In Adelaide the situation has become even more confused after Adelaide Sharks shareholders rejected Peter Emery's bid and instead vowed to fight for their NSL status.

The South Australian Soccer Federation, meanwhile, is looking to continue its own bid for inclusion in the NSL.

Early last week a meeting of Sharks club members yesterday rejected the Peter Emery rescue deal which would have effectively seen their team dropped back into state league football.

The Adelaide United consortium led by Emery had offered a \$450,000 buy-out.

The deal had been accepted by the club's

creditors but was conditional on the Sharks withdrawing from the NSL so

that a new entity, Adelaide United, could represent a broader section of the community.

The Sharks are also under the control of an administrator and their future looks just as bleak as it did two months ago.

The club will now look to solve its own financial plight and then apply for inclusion in next season's NSL.

Remarkably, there could now be three separate bids for one vacancy in Adelaide.

However, it is by no means certain that Soccer Australia will accept any of the bids and Adelaide could well be a one-team town next season.

Crowds at this year's matches, both at City and Sharks, have been disappointing, plummeting as low as one thousand on occasions.

Theo Parisos remains confident that the club can survive.

The Sharks president, who is a strong supporter of ousted coach Manfred Schaefer, says: "Members and the community have

responded powerfully to the club's needs.

"We have significant financial pledges which not only will bring the club back to members but also allow us to fund next season's Ericsson Cup.

"I can't tell you how much we have raised or how much we have been promised.

"But it's big money and we have some major sponsors ready to come in."

Parissos was originally involved in the Emery Adelaide United bid but has now pledged his support to the continuation of Adelaide Sharks.

And adding another surprise in the tail of the story, former major shareholder Con Makris is back in the picture, pledging support as a sponsor.

Makris, who hit the headlines for all the wrong reasons has already made cash donation to Adelaide Sharks.

Further progress on the situation is expected this week and Soccer Australia is likely to decide on the final format of the 1999/2000 league season by mid-June.

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Aussies on the move in Europe

Andy Petterson has been handed a free transfer by Charlton Athletic ... Reading has awarded Steve Mautone a short-term contract until December to prove his form and fitness ... Notts County youngster Damien Beattie looks certain to return home after failing to win a contract extension with the Second Division Club ... Tynan Scope is likely to leave Coventry City despite showing good form in the reserves late this season.

The Crystal Palace pair of Craig Foster and Nick Rizzo have been transferred by the cash-strapped London Club.

Olyroo Mark Robertson has agreed to terms for another year with English Second Division side Burnley.

Ante Milicic has returned to NAC Breda's reserve side after completing a week's trial with Greek First Division Club OFI Crete.

John Filan has cleaned up the awards night at Ewood Park following a



Steve Mautone: the former Gippsland, South Melbourne and Cosmos keeper is under pressure at Reading

tremendous season between the sticks.

The 29 year-old won the Player-of-the-Year, the Disabled Supporters' Player-of-the-Year, and the Junior Rovers Player-of-the-Year.

Furthermore, Filan has committed his future to Blackburn despite their

relegation from the top flight.

And in reserves news from England ... Steve Corica played a full game as Wolverhampton Wanderers crashed 4-1 to Birmingham in the final of the Birmingham Senior Cup.

Michael Ferrante and

Richard Garcia were part of history midweek as West Ham United recorded the largest-ever victory in an FA Youth Cup final following their 6-0 thrashing of Coventry City in the 2nd Leg (9-0 on aggregate).

Western Australia's Garcia scored twice in

front of a capacity crowd at Upton Park.

Former Melbourne Knights striker Josip Bacak has been transferred by Dutch First Division Club Vitesse Arnhem.

25 year-old Bacak was recently on-trial with Anderlecht and has played just six senior games following the signing of a five-year contract in the 1996/1997 season, with his last appearance for the first XI being on October 23, 1996 against Roda JC.

19-year-old midfielder Shane Lyons has returned from a short stint at Coventry City to play in the ACT Premier League ... mid-fielder Lee Gillman has spent the 1998/99 season playing for Norwich City's Academy side ... and yet another lost Aussie has been found - he is 22 year-old former Melbourne Knights outfield player Arthur Tsirtsakis of Greek Second Division Club Ialisos Rhodes.

Villa bridge burned for Bosnich



Socceroo goalkeeper Mark Bosnich has reportedly rejected calls by his Aston Villa boss to reconsider staying with the club.

Aston Villa manager John Gregory has invited Bosnich to stay at the club just weeks after dropping him from playing in a match against Manchester United, English paper the News of the World said last Sunday.

Bosnich has been hotly tipped to take over from United's goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel next season.

But Bosnich said he was considering "all options" for his future, except staying at the English Premier League club.

"The manager hasn't spoken to me for three weeks so that particular bridge has been burned behind me," he said.

Bosnich said being dumped for the game against United had cast serious doubt on his professionalism and vowed he would never play for Aston Villa again.

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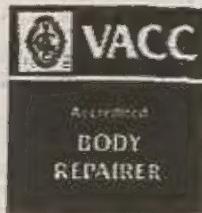
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Bruce Campbell

IT'S ONLY AN OPINION

LIVE COVERAGE by television is a contentious point all over the world – and Australia is no different.

The two main points which are hot for debate are; * does the live coverage of soccer detract from attendance at matches? * is the package of full match coverage attractive to viewers?

The first point has a direct bearing on the immediate financial well-being of clubs while the second has a bearing on future viability.

There isn't much doubt that the live coverage by ABC this season has significantly affected attendances at NSL games.

In many cases clubs have lost as much as \$40-50,000 on match day earnings – per game.

With each club supposed to have been limited to two home matches that meant a likely loss of about \$80,000 per club.

Times that over the 15 clubs in the league and already the amount lost in direct gate takings tots up to about a million plus.

You could, of course, argue that the benefits brought to the game far outweigh the revenue lost.

You might even be able to argue that the exposure brought to those clubs' sponso



David Hill: should he cop the blame for the poor quality of this season's TV coverage of NSL soccer?

sponsors, in terms of TV exposure of sponsor's names and ground signage is significant.

But I reckon if you took that argument to the average club you would lose, and lose by a major margin.

The truth is that exposure to club sponsors isn't worth a jot because it doesn't relate to increased revenue for those

clubs.

Already they are hard pressed, in the majority of cases, to bring in major sponsorship and I can't imagine too many of those companies willing to fork out their share of the lost \$80,000 just because they have had a few glimpses on Auntie.

Particularly with the ABC's well-known stance on com-

merciality and the attempts they make to reduce it at every opportunity.

Wherever possible they do not plug sponsor's names, they avoid shooting ground signage wherever possible and generally maintain a Corinthian-like stance on the game.

There is nothing wrong with a straight-down-the-line attitude and often I have felt that the game has become over-commercialised in recent years.

But tell that to a financial director who is responsible for balancing the books.

Instead of having a look-and-see at national TV coverage we have gone in boots and all and signed a mammoth deal which will tie us up for far too long.

That was all in the name of having commercial TV coverage.

But what we have got instead is third best, because that is what the ABC is.

Regardless of the truth that SBS coverage just doesn't extend far enough it is hard to argue with the level of coverage they have given the game.

Their commentary panels, love them or hate them, contain a fair bit of knowledge and profile.

This season I have been, with the rare exception of Peter Wilkins stint at the mike, been appalled by the banal

and trivial like commentary.

The constant resort to pre-written statistics is a sure sign that the commentary team doesn't have the goods.

And I'm not referring to Alan Hunter who I believe has done a pretty good job in his first season.

Likewise Robbie Wheatley does a polished job as sideline commentator.

I have sometimes felt, though, that he could have been given a more prominent role.

Steve Robilliard just isn't goo enough.

That, of course, is just a personal opinion.

As is my view that the ABC coverage has, on the whole, been lamentable.

But what isn't opinion is that major gaffes about starting and finishing were paled into insignificance when their 'live' coverage of Perth v Marconi lept forward by an hour for long enough to let all the viewers know what the likely final score would be.

Another total disaster.

The difference between Auntie and commercial is that on commercial TV someone

would have either been fired or severely censured for that mistake – because the advertisers would have refused to pay.

The other point concerns whether our game is good

enough for a full live coverage of an entire match.

In fact, how many games anywhere in the world are worthy of a full ninety minute coverage?

Wouldn't the game have been better served with a highlights package plus snips from other games and then a panel show?

But does the ABC really care about what is good for the game, either present or future?

They are in the business of public broadcasting and might well argue, and with a degree of authority, that it isn't their responsibility to look after the interests of the sport of soccer.

That, they might argue, is the remit of Soccer Australia. You can hardly blame any of the present incumbents of office at Paddington for the current situation.

I know there will be a great deal of our readers who are going to groan, but the blame has to stop somewhere.

My personal opinion is that the TV deal is a lousy one. Channel 7 has shafted us royally by bumping us off to ABC.

The deal itself is too long and the clubs stand to lose a small fortune with lost receipts.

Advantages?

In the present format I can't really see many.

I don't suppose David Hill would have foreseen the possible outcome when he signed our game away.

But my honest opinion is that the ABC coverage is crap and so is the deal.

Well done, David.

1999

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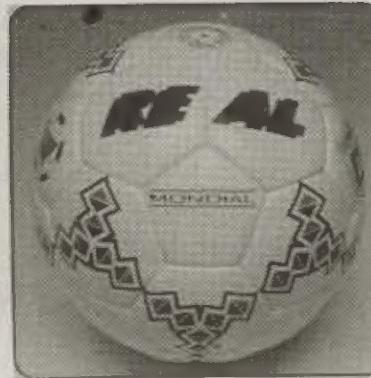
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THE 1999 NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE TOP SIX

Solid back line gives Trimboli confidence

by Luke Bear

IN LAST season's Grand Final at Olympic Park South Melbourne played against first season club Carlton who had just finished second in the league. This season has been different for the Champions in at least the fact that Carlton are no longer contenders.

"That is one of the main differences between this season and last," agrees South skipper Paul Trimboli. "Last season every time we turned around we had to play them."

"We had Carlton in the last home and away leg then we played them in the Major semi final, both home and away, then we played them again in the Grand Final."

"This year it seems to be a similar situation with Sydney United."

"We played United in the second last home and away match and then in the two legged Major semi final - so that was a similar sort of routine."

South Melbourne have shown a lot of depth this sea-

son with class players like Jim Tsekenis and John Anastasiadis sitting on the bench for some of the season.

It has been one of the major factors in South's successful run to the Grand Final.

"That's for sure," agrees Trimboli.

"I think over the course of the 30 games we've had a lot of disruptions including injuries, suspensions and players leaving and going away."

"So I think if we didn't have that quality in cover then our performances would have suffered."

"Instead we've been able to keep a consistent level of performance."

"We've had to make a lot of changes and that's where those other players come in."

"You can't hope to achieve consistency if you don't have quality players in reserve."

"Another plus is that we have a lot of experience on the bench also."

Trimboli rates Sydney United as the other achiever in the NSL.

"They have obviously ex-

celled," he says.

"If you looked at them at the start of the season, had a look at their players' list and then all the problems which went along with their season they have done really well."

"They have had a great season and for them to win the League was an excellent result."

"Newcastle have also had a good season and they were actually in line for a finals spot right up until the last few games."

"There isn't any doubt that this is a testing time for South Melbourne."

"In the past we were the best supported club from the originals and although we are proud of that fact I don't know if we really pushed ourselves as a club."

"But Perth and Northern Spirit have shown that crowds of 15 thousand are achievable."

"A lot of people thought that wasn't realistic but Perth have now been doing that for three seasons so it isn't a short term thing."

"What Perth and Spirit are

doing is putting up a challenge to existing clubs, especially South Melbourne, to improve and get our crowds to match theirs."

Although Trimboli cites the need to reassess the position of traditional clubs South Melbourne have still maintained their own position in the top three of crowd pullers.

And they are undoubtedly the best supported away club with the potential to pull along thousands of supporters to vital away matches, even interstate.

"It is fantastic to get a travelling support," he says.

"One of the big problems in the NSL is the distance between cities. Unless you are playing a local derby you don't get two sets of supporters and when you do get rival supporters it certainly adds to the atmosphere."

"We have got a good core of supporters that are diehard and who follow us all over the country."

"They had a bearing on our result against Sydney United in the playoff game at Edensor Park although I think that the players really had the biggest bearing on the result."

"Against United we were confident."

"We knew if we stuck to our guns then we would get at least a draw and we knew that the advantage was with us because we had the result from the first leg."

"So we knew that some kind of a draw was going to be a positive result for us."

"Our backline has been playing well this season."

"We conceded the least amount of goals in the league this season and when you go into a game with that at the back of your mind you are pretty confident."

"So we knew if we kept things tight then it would probably go our way."



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THE 1999 NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE TOP SIX

Mike gets butterflies while Ang keeps it low key in Grand Final build-up

By Ted Simmons
and Paul Millar

SYDNEY United stand-in goalkeeper Mike Gibson continued to defy the odds as his team pushed for a grand final berth in the national soccer league.

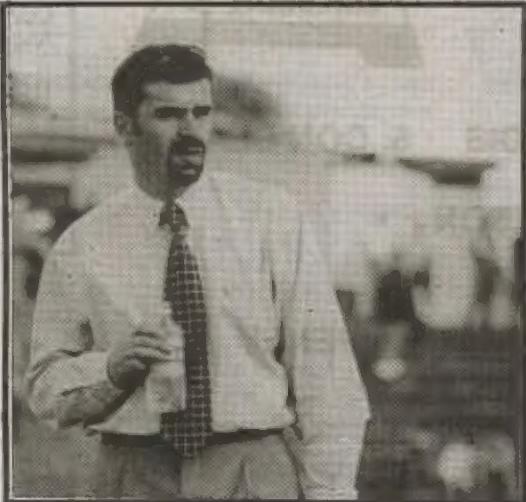
The 36-year-old Gibson lined up on Sunday for the Ericsson Cup preliminary final against Perth Glory at neutral Marconi Stadium and played a significant part in his side's 2-1 win.

Gibson was signed at the start of the season as a specialist goalkeeping coach but also signed as a player in case his services were required.

Halfway in, he was back.

"The injury to Andrew Crews left a gap to fill and I just stepped in," Gibson said.

"I had intended to play for Penrith in the NSW State League but have stayed instead with



Angie Postecoglou

United and will still switch to Penrith once the national league is ended.

"It was not my intention to play for United but it has turned out to be a bonus because I've been doing all the work and this has kept me fit."

Gibson made one prior appearance in a Grand Final when he was custo-

dian for St George which beat Apia Leichhardt 4-0 in the 1987 grand final.

He conceded 33 goals in 28 matches this season, giving United the third best defence.

As Perth was the only team to post two wins over United this season, 3-2 and 4-3, Gibson was concerned at keeping the Glory at bay before the

big match.

"Perth have so many players who can turn a game. Most other clubs only have a couple who can be marked but Perth have so many who can make something out of nothing," he said.

But United was the side to turn on the style and in the end should have won far more convincingly than the 2-1 scoreline would reflect.

Gibson said he still gets nervous before a game but tries to focus the nervous energy so that it works for him.

"I still get butterflies. It's part of the adrenalin of playing at this level and there's no point in playing if you don't get worked up."

South Melbourne coach Ang Postecoglou always expected Sydney United to beat Perth Glory on Sunday and then face South in the Ericsson Cup Grand Final.

South took the direct

route to soccer's show-piece by beating United over two legs and now has the luxury of a healing fortnight before hosting the Grand Final at Olympic Park.

"I (always) thought Sydney United would be very tough to beat there (at Marconi Stadium)," Postecoglou said.

South's aim was always to secure the Grand Final in Melbourne and it's obvious why.

Postecoglou said his club had only lost about one game in 40 at its home ground, the last defeat was at the end of last season when it fell to Carlton.

However the result then was irrelevant as South had already won the league.

His biggest task over the next week will be keeping his players occupied.

"We've done it before, last season in fact, and we'll be keeping it low

key this week.

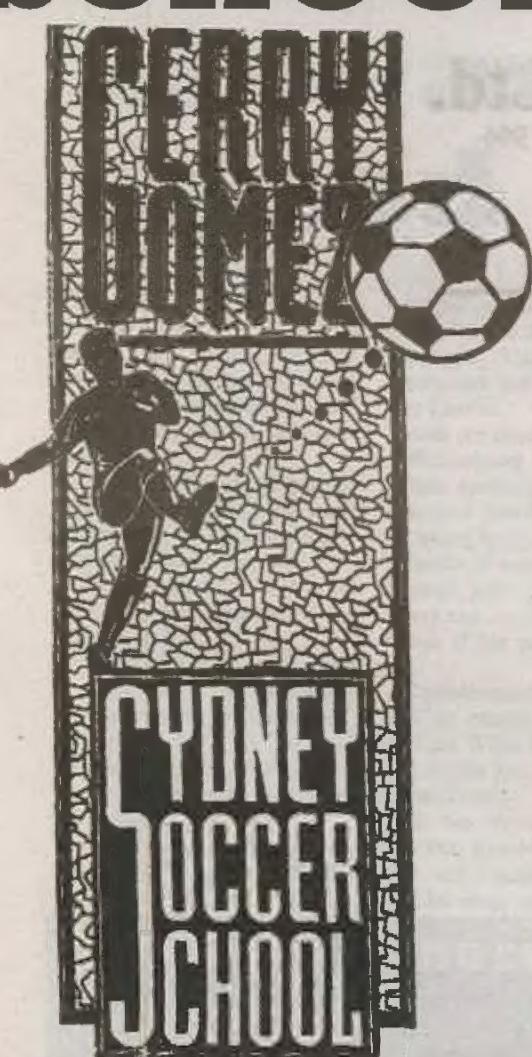
"In Grand Final week things take care of themselves as you're always busy and it is intense but this week we'll be taking it easy," Postecoglou said.

The break will also give star winger Goran Lozanski time to recover from the calf injury which prevented him from playing against United.



Mike Gibson

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1st v 2nd
16 May
SYDNEY UNITED 0
SOUTH MELBOURNE 0

QUARTER FINAL First Leg
2nd v 1st
9 May
SOUTH MELBOURNE 2
SYDNEY UNITED 1

QUARTER FINAL Second Leg
4th v 5th
9 May
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THE 1999 NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE TOP SIX

Glory message sounds a warning for the National Soccer League

By Paul Ruffini

A HANDFUL of true believers with little more than "a concept" and a few tables and chairs in a small Perth office have created an Australian soccer phenomenon in three years.

And, the ramifications of Perth Glory's success on and off the field could ultimately change the face of the game in Australia by forcing other clubs to loosen their traditional ethnic ties.

"We desperately need the rest of soccer to lift its game," said Glory general manager Roger Lefort. "We need them to progress before we can progress a great deal more."

The Glory roll has swept the West Australian capital for the past year, culminating at the WACA when 28,000 fanatical fans showed up for the 1-0 semi-final victory over Marconi.

There are no more home games for the ex-

uberant "Glory Boys" who packed the hill at Perth Oval this season, on average, 15,000 a game creating a boisterous, good-natured atmosphere compared to Anfield and Old Trafford 30 years ago.

Last Sunday for the Glory Boys and Girls, the real reason for the team's success, were sinking their pints in front of Perth television sets.

Glory's rise in a state obsessed with Australian Rules Football and cricket, but also with a near pathological determination to prove itself against the eastern states, has been a marketing triumph.

What the marketeers did doesn't sound startling, they simply established an Australian soccer club free of any ethnic ties. That in a state where 30 per cent of the population was born somewhere else.

"That was our objective from day one," said Jim Davies from 303 marketing consultancy.

"We were never intending to be an ethnic club. All our literature, our name, our positioning has been as an Australian club. We haven't done the kangaroos and the wallabies and the didgeridoos stuff. We've just been contemporary Australian, not intending to overly endear ourselves to Australians, but being for everybody."

Glory also didn't want to alienate the migrant base from traditional soccer countries, they wanted a generic product for their supporters.

"Their only concern is for the one team that is on the park. They don't care whether Joe Bloggs standing next to him comes from Italy, Greece or England," Lefort said.

Former Soccer Australia chairman David Hill made enemies by forcing clubs to drop ethnic names and dropping emblems of overseas nations from their playing shirts.

Lefort said there's still a "long, long, long way to go" de-ethnicising the game.

But the bottom line; more money, more sponsors, better players a better coach and bigger crowds, the proof of the Glory strategy's success, is encouraging others.

Sydney's Northern Spirit is another club with no ethnic baggage already rivalling and overtaking Glory's success in a tougher market where it competes against rugby league, rugby union, the Sydney Swans and other soccer clubs.

South Melbourne, defending National Soccer League champion with a Greek support base, pre-sold only 100 tickets to its preliminary final two weeks ago, prompting an angry outburst from club president George Vasilopoulos.

"It's becoming more and more evident that it is becoming extremely difficult for us," he said.

"When they get more crowds they get more NSL."

publicity, bigger money, more sponsors and sooner or later they will attract the top players and coaches and win championships."

NSL general manager Stefan Kamasz recognises the difficulties established clubs will have in following Perth Glory,

better marketing and promoting the game without alienating traditional supporters.

"I see a team like South Melbourne, provided they continue going beyond their current supporter base, as being able to participate on a long term basis," he said.

"But those clubs who are not prepared to bite the bullet are going to find it very difficult, and, you may well see that their life span in this league is not long".

Kamasz had another warning for the established clubs, saying many organisations with a lot of capital had contacted him about entering the NSL.

He had been approached about new teams for Parramatta, Brisbane, Adelaide and even a second Perth team.

"Things are quite healthy at the moment," he said.

The lesson the new clubs can take from the Glory is selling a sporting event and not just the game. Rides for children at the ground, rock music, dancers and reconfiguring Perth Oval, an AFL ground, to move fans closer to the action are all about the Glory experience.

If atmosphere can be deliberately constructed, the Glory has done it.

"From day one we set out to create a big club and to make it a big event," Davies said.

"Where does that leave the likes of the other clubs that live on the adrenalin of being part of their community, and not live on the real money of the world of soccer which we know is enormous".

best scoring record in the league, also make the script near perfect.

Glory is privately owned with a three member board allowing it to make instant decisions without going through committee red tape.

Lefort refused to reveal Glory's financial position, but said any profits are re-invested back into the club.

Sunday's preliminary final against Sydney United was almost irrelevant, off the field the Glory knows it has already won.

"It's an inevitable fact of life that the most prosperous clubs will dominate in a sport where there is no salary cap or that sort of thing," Davies explained.

"Where does that leave the likes of the other clubs that live on the adrenalin of being part of their community, and not live on the real money of the world of soccer which we know is enormous".



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THE 1999 NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE TOP SIX

There won't be any Day Dreaming for United's top striker

By Bruce Campbell
and agencies

SYDNEY UNITED striker Nathan Day wanted to prove his fitness with a winning performance for Sydney United in the national soccer league preliminary final against Perth Glory last Sunday.

The 25-year-old former West Adelaide front runner has had a slow year by his standards after a long lay-off to recover from injury.

Day has never played in an NSL Grand Final or even in a finals series although he was in the Campbelltown team which made the grand final in the 1994 South Australian premier league.

"That's the only time I've been in a big match atmosphere until now," Day said.

"I was looking forward to Sunday because it's only one step away from the Ericsson Cup Grand Final and everyone wanted to make sure we won that match."

"Although Perth has beaten us twice this season, if the games were analysed it would show not so much that Perth won but we lost."

"In the last round of the competition, they had four chances and scored four times while the ball wouldn't go in for us."

Day was regularly replaced by coach David Mitchell when he returned from an eight-month injury absence but played his first full 90 minutes in the first leg of the major semifinal against South Melbourne two weeks ago.

He was replaced in the second half of the return match but believes it was a tactical move by Mitchell and not a fitness problem.

Sydney United's finishing has been a concern this season but Day said they have always managed to come up with goals.

"We may have missed chances but our scoring is not too bad."

Against Perth Glory Day turned in a Man of the Match performance and is sure to be one of United's trump cards in Sunday's Grand Final.

The big striker with the trademark whiskers is good in the air, turns quickly and has a definite nose for goal.

He could well be the ace in coach David Mitchell's pack.



"There's not much difference between the sides but Perth has a group of danger players including Bobby Despotovski, Alistair Edwards and John Markovski," Day

said before the Preliminary Final.

"We had an opportunity to go direct to the Grand Final, we had another last weekend, we had a second

bite at the minor premiership.

"That's enough. Let's go out and win it," he added.

Only ninety minutes now stand between Nathan Day and his dream.

FINALS CUP (1977-1983)

<i>not held 1977/81/83</i>	
1978	Sydney City 4 (Smith, Watson, Treter, Campbell) Marconi 2 (Ollerton, Vieri) Venue: Sydney
1979	1st Leg Sydney City 1 (M Silva) Brisbane City 0 Venue: Sydney
	2nd Leg Brisbane City 1 (Kelso) Sydney City 1 (Treter) Venue: Brisbane
1980	* Sydney City won 2-1 on aggregate Heidelberg 4 (Cole 3, Paton) Sydney City 0 Venue: Bruce Stadium, Canberra
1982	St George 3 (Marlon - 3) Sydney City 1 (Kosmina) Venue: Penrith

GRAND FINAL CHAMPIONSHIP (from 1984)

1984	1st Leg South Melbourne 2 (Egan) Sydney Olympic 1 (Koussas) Venue: Olympic Park, Melbourne Att: 10,011
	2nd Leg Sydney Olympic 1 (Theodorakopoulos) South Melbourne 2 (Crino, Yzendoorn) Venue: St George Stadium, Sydney Att: 11,221
1985	* South Melbourne won 4-2 on aggregate 1st Leg Sydney City 0 Brunswick 1 (Incantalupo) Venue: St George Stadium, Sydney Att: 2,491
	2nd Leg Brunswick 1 (Incantalupo) Sydney City 0 Venue: Olympic Park, Melbourne Att: 7,560
1986	1st Leg Adelaide City 0 Sydney Olympic 1 (Spyridakos) Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide Att: 12,232
	2nd Leg Sydney Olympic 1 (Johnstone) Adelaide City 3 (Melta pen, Vilani, Maxwell) Venue: Parramatta Stadium, Sydney Att: 14,032
1987	St George 4 Apia 0 Venue: Parramatta Stadium Att: 6,951 #Not Championship Decider
1988	Marconi 2 (Calderan, Nastevski) Sydney United 2 (Hunter, Lamond) Marconi won 5-4 in a penalty shoot out after extra time. Venue: Parramatta Stadium, Sydney Att: 17,064
1989	Marconi 1 (Nastevski) Sydney Olympic 0 Venue: Parramatta Stadium, Sydney Att: 23,387
1990	Marconi 0 Sydney Olympic 2 (Edwards, Ironside) Venue: Parramatta Stadium, Sydney Att: 26,352* Marston Medal: Abbas Saad
1991	South Melbourne 1 (Palatsides) Melbourne Knights 1 South Melbourne won 5-4 in a penalty shoot out after extra time Venue: Olympic Park, Melbourne Att: 23,318 Marston Medal: Joe Biskic
1992	Adelaide City 0 Melbourne Knights 0 Adelaide won 4-2 in a penalty shoot out after extra time. Venue: Olympic Park, Melbourne Att: 15,463 Marston Medal: Alex Tobin
1993	Marconi 1 (Harper pen) Adelaide City 0 Venue: Parramatta Stadium, Sydney Att: 13,376 Marston Medal: Milan Ivanovic
1994	Adelaide City 1 (Mori) Melbourne Knights 0 Venue: Olympic Park, Melbourne Att: 13,970 Marston Medal: Alex Tobin
1995	Melbourne Knights 2 (Marth, Spiteri) Adelaide City 0 Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide Att: 15,573* Marston Medal: Steve Horvat
1996	Melbourne Knights 2 (Marth, A Cervinski) Marconi Fairfield 1 (Harper) Venue: Olympic Park, Melbourne Att: 14,258 Marston Medal: Andrew Marth
1997	Brisbane Strikers 2 (Farina, Brown) Sydney United 0 Venue: Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane Att: 40,446* Marston Medal: Alan Hunter
1998	South Melbourne 2 (Anastasiadis, Boutsianis) Carlton 1 (Stergiopoulos) Venue: Olympic Park, Melbourne Att: 15,706 Marston Medal: Fausto de Amicis

* Ground record for soccer

New Australian all-time attendance record

INSIDE SOCCER SUPPLEMENT

ROCHEDALE ROVERS SOCCER CLUB

From humble roots to NSL aspiration

IN NOVEMBER 1972 local resident Tommy Vance advertised for anyone interested in forming a soccer club.

Right from the start local businesses came forward, including the late Graham Hogg of Graham Hogg Real estate, Brian Fitzibbon of the Glen Hotel and John Beerling from Galeprufe Garages.

Within a few years Rochedale Rovers had secured land at Underwood Park, de-

veloped three fields (fenced and floodlit) and built a canteen, office and showers.

Many different people contributed the countless hours of volunteer work, without doubt one of the reasons why Rochedale Rovers has become the club it is today.

Since those early days thousands of families have enjoyed the atmosphere and facilities and have in turn helped to make them bigger and better



The dining room with an outlook onto the Underwood Park playing pitch

UNDERWOOD PARK

has also hosted many tournaments at both State and National level.

And from time to time international teams have also used the Rochedale Rovers facility for training.

Additionally, the Rovers outstanding facility has been used by schools, representative team training and for coaching clinics and courses.

so that today that early idea of a few local supporters has become a thriving industry.

Today the club employs nearly 50 people both full and part time.

Rochedale Rovers has a fully air-conditioned family

bistro, a function room that will cater for 160 people and overlooks the main playing field and a smaller conference room holding up to 80 people.

The clubhouse is open seven days a week, complete with poker machines, Keno, mini

TAB and live entertainment on weekends.

The soccer side of the club has grown just as furiously.

Beneath the grandstand are some of the best facilities in Queensland; four large size changing rooms, showers,

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Like many state league clubs Rochedale Rovers have ambitions of NSL membership and have left no stone unturned in becoming one of Queensland's best clubs.

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ROCHEDALE Rovers currently field seven senior teams, three of these playing in the Queensland Soccer Federation's Premier league - the elite level in Queensland state league soccer.

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League Premiership.

At the time of going to press with this article the Rovers had just been knocked off top spot by Brisbane Lions.

The club also fields two women's teams playing in Division 1 and Division 5 and a girls under 16 squad is currently being formed which is hoped to be in place by the start of the new season.

FIRST TEAM SQUAD

- 1 Graham Ross*
- 2 Dwayne Good
- 3 Ross Davidson
- 4 Michael Lane*
- 5 Damian Harris*
- 6 Alan Evans*

- 7 Steve Fitzsimmons
- 8 Michael Legg
- 9 Kieran Cooper*
- 10 Clayton Koch*
- 11 Nick Alidenes
- 12 David Pilic
- 13 Brad Ditton*
- 14 Mark Luburich
- 15 Greg Anderson
- 16 Matt Olley
- 17 Gary Brattan*
- 18 Andy Monement
- 20 Todd Rumble

NOTE: Players marked * have represented Queensland at senior representative level while Alan Evans has played for New Zealand at full International level.

Rochedale Juniors

THE ROVERS have close to 700 registered junior players (both boys and girls). Children start at age 5 and can progress right through to senior level.

Professional coaches led by Senior Coach Peter Bannon and Junior Director of Coaching Brian MacNicol ensure that all coaching staff are well equipped to carry out club policies.

Rochedale players who have progressed to national team level include Olyroos Kasey Wehrman and Jade North as well as Australian Youth team goalkeeper Michael Turnbull.

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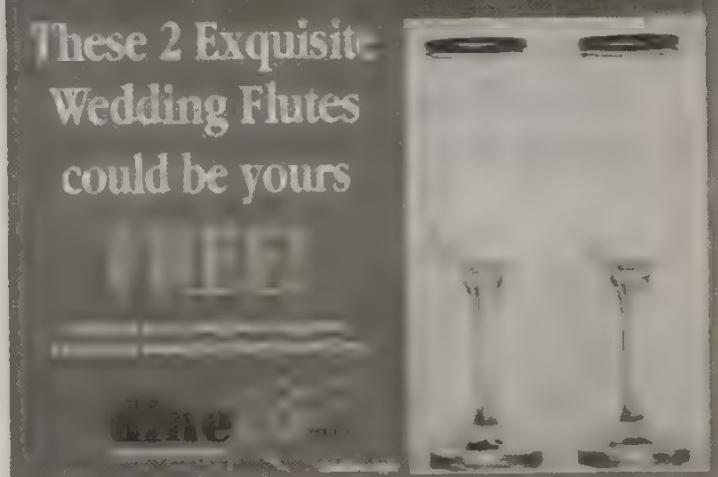
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Brown names Matildas squad for Women's World Cup

By Ted Simmons

LONG-serving striker Julie Murray (pictured) will lead Australia in the third FIFA Women's World Cup finals in the United States next month.

Murray, who captained Australia in the last Cup finals, has represented Australia 57 times with Anissa Tann-Darby the only player ahead of her with 67 caps.

National coach Greg Brown has named a squad of 20 to travel to the United States, including nine members of the team which finished last at the 1995 World Cup finals.

"I'm really happy the players are fit and ready to go to the World Cup," Brown said.

"They have been playing well, are excited by the tournament and I believe they are capable of doing very well."



Australia is currently ranked eighth after a series of victories in the past 18 months at international level.

The team defeated Olympic silver medallist China, beat European heavyweights Sweden and Italy and had a winning tour of North Korea.

In the World Cup preliminary round, Australia has been drawn against China, Sweden and Ghana and Brown said the

MATILDAS coach Greg Brown has named a squad which bears a strong resemblance to that which flopped so badly in the Algarve Cup last March.

Out go Sonia Gegenhuber, Shelley Youman, Kim Revell (who has been named in the Under 21 squad) and goalkeeper Joanne Butland who was Australia's hero in the penalty shoot out win over Sweden which allowed Brown's side to grab some face with a fifth placing.

In come six other players as the squad is increased to 20 members: Dianne Alagich, Tracey Wheeler, Kristyn Swaffer, Amy Taylor, Alison Forman and Amy Wilson.

With the Sydney Olympics, and the hope of a medal placing, looming large Brown is under increasing pressure to do well at the World Cup. To keep their dream alive the Matildas must at least be a contender for a semi final placing.

Anything less will be totally unacceptable given the huge amount of government funds poured into the full time women's programme over the last few years.

players would be confident after their earlier successes.

The team will leave on May 31 for four warm-up games against the United States, Bra-

zil and Canada before meeting Ghana in the opening Cup match on June 20.

Brown has also selected a group of younger players with the Sydney Olympics in view to gain experience at top level.

Among them are 17-year-old school students Peta-Claire Hepperlin, Kelly Golebiowski and Alicia Ferguson as well as Amy Wilson (18) and Dianne Alagich (20).

Hepperlin, from the ACT, has only played twice for Australia and is the youngest member of the squad while Alagich has five caps and Wilson seven.

Macor the menace

by Nick Guoth

THE University of Canberra were their own worst enemy in their match against Monaro at Riverside Stadium.

The defence found all too many different ways to give the ball away and Monaro capitalised on this with Danny Macor being the most significant benefactor.

In fact, Macor had a hand in all of Monaro's goals. Monaro won the game 5-2, but leading 4-0 at the break meant the game was all but over and one could see the players move into cruise mode.

The writing was on the wall early when Uni keeper Chris Freeman was needed to pull off two one-on-one saves, both from the feet of Macor. Then in the ninth minute a corner from Joe Campagna came out to Brent Chick. His shot became a pass when Macor intercepted, turned and placed the ball to secure his hat-trick.

The Uni dressing room was not a place for the calm and collected and the obvious tirade worked wonders.

Just under 30 seconds had gone when Foxhill was able to beat his defender near the corner and sent a ball to the far post for Bartone to finish.

At the quarter of the hour mark the ball fell to Macor on the side of the box. He managed to turn his defender and put in a pin-point cross for Jimmy Baxter to head home.

Laz Simeonov found himself in exactly the same position just prior to half-hour mark. He also turned his defender

but this time sent a pass to Macor who with plenty of time picked his spot to make it three.

It wasn't until just past the half-hour mark that Uni had their first threatening shot at goal. A Simon Foxhill cross found Dominic Bartone and his header went agonisingly wide.

In the last 5 minutes of the half, substitute Nick Behr proved himself as the saviour when twice he kicked the ball off the line with the keeper beaten.

The first denied Simeonov and the second Macor. Meanwhile in between these two bouts of heroics, a corner kick from Campagna came out to Brent Chick. His shot became a pass when Macor intercepted, turned and placed the ball to secure his hat-trick.

The Uni dressing room was not a place for the calm and collected and the obvious tirade worked wonders.

John Nelson had an excellent game as did Darryl North. Brent

Chick, an up and coming player, also did very well" Monterosso stated.

Rod Lynes said his team were just not learning from their mistakes. "Our defence was all over the place in the first 15 minutes", he said.

THERE was a hard fought game at Majura Oval between two struggling teams, Gungahlin Juventus and the Burns Club.

Speculation before the game centred on how the Deakin side would respond to the mid-week sacking of coach Ian Shaw, but the team quickly put these fears to bed with four unanswered goals inside the first half-an-hour.

Deakin's Paul Ivanic had his second-minute strike touched over the bar by the Queanbeyan keeper, but wasn't to be denied three minutes later after good

Juventus came out 2-1 winners, but Burns will feel disappointed after they could not hold onto a 1-0 lead which they carried until there were only 20 minutes remaining.

Sean Madden had put them ahead and all was looking good for their second win of the season, until the defence fell into disarray and allowed Juventus to take the points.

Juventus should have scored in the first half, but for a penalty that wasn't converted. In those dying 20 minutes, George Cattanach and Yosip Zamora were the scorers for Juventus, but they missed a number of other opportunities that could have been put away.

No one really stood out for either team as both teams battled en-masse, although Niall Stoddart had a good game.

IN THE battle between the third and fourth placed teams, Weston Creek Royals came out in front 4-2 winners over

Capital City Suns at O'Connor Oval.

The scoreline flattered the Suns as it wasn't until late in the game that they scored their two and only after Weston had substituted two of their defend-

The Suns came out well in the opening 15 minutes, but after that Weston began to dominate. Peter Hader scored the first when he challenged for a header with keeper Tony Giannasca, knocking the loose ball home.

A cross from the right hand side saw a mistake from the Suns defence that allowed Steve Lazari to score.

Lazzari potted the third and set up the fourth when he sent a near post ball for Hami Adhami to tap in.

Capital City Suns pegged two back, one from Frank Giorgi and the other by youngster Pat Phommaseisy.

Weston coach Jimmy Bland was pleased with his team's handsome performance. "We worked extremely hard, especially in defence", said Bland. "Our players have listened and learnt well".

HAWKER Oval saw the clash of the two teams that at the beginning of the season were expected to fight out the championship, Belconnen United and Canberra Olympic.

Olympic, seen as the favourites prior to the

season's commencement, are now in deep trouble after they succumbed to an injury-time winner from Ray Junna.

The first half saw both teams struggling hard to gain ascendancy. Belconnen took charge of their right-hand side and allowed Olympic to look after the other side.

Marko Perinovic had a couple of good chances, but the nearest he came saw him head the ball wide. At the other end, Olympic should have gone ahead when Danny Raad beat Jason Dunn and was solo with Rade Kosanovic.

IN ACT Women's Soccer action the two undefeated teams in first division have their records still intact reports Anya Whitelaw.

ACT Academy of Sport drew 2-2 with Belconnen United at Calwell on Sunday. Both teams were unable to convert their chances until the 21st minute when ACTAS defender Teneille Bray bought Clorinda Iannucci down inside the box. Dior Foxhill stepped up to take the shot and although keeper Amy Beattie moved in the right direction, Belconnen took a 1-0 lead. The ACTAS side faded into the break, but Belconnen was unable to capitalise on this. A half-time plea by ACTAS coach Ian Murray for his players to lift was heard, his team going into the second half all guns blazing.

Kim Channing was unlucky not to score when she intercepted a backpass to Belconnen's keeper and again three minutes later when she sent the ball just over the crossbar. Belconnen then hit back, scoring a goal totally against the flow of play. A Corbett ball intended as a cross beat the diving keeper to go into the back of the net.

Two goals down and Channing finally broke thorough for ACTAS, leaving three defenders in her wake before slotting the ball past the keeper. ACTAS continued to pressure Belconnen without success, until eight minutes out from fulltime when they were awarded controversial free kick. Channing took the kick from just outside the box, clearing the wall to tie the scores at 2-2. The scores remained this way until fulltime, ACT Women's Soccer Association President Heather Reid thrilled with the standard of play: "It was great to see this standard of high play from players who will be the future of the Association."

In other games Burns-Brindabella defeated Weston Creek 1-0 and Tuggeranong had 3-0 upset over City.

Rade was able to deflect the shot and fortunately for Belconnen, Junna was on hand to clear off the line.

The second half settled down with rare chances falling to either team, and then with the game appearing to fade to a scoreless draw, a corner from Scott Manson bounced off the crossbar for Junna to head in.

Bels coach Lino Fiorese said: "we contained them well today and defended better. Still the chances need to be put away otherwise we are putting pressure on ourselves".



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Indoor squads named for NZ tour

THE Indoor Soccer (Five A Side) Association of NSW has a very comprehensive schools programme and holds tournaments throughout the year in various centres in Sydney, Windsor, Centra Coast, Newcastle and on the South Coast.

The culmination of all these tournaments was the selection of the Secondary Schools teams for 15 year old girls and boys who will tour New Zealand in July.

Competitions have already started in the schools competition for 12999 and the Indoor Soccer Association plans to send even more teams on tour in 2000.

GIRLS squad:

Sheena Stubbs, Carisa Hoban (Terrigal High School), Nicole Rickard (Marist Sisters Woolwich), Emily Brandjes, Danielle Rogers (Colo High School), Linda Capizzi (Nowra High School), Lorissa Stevens, Tara Herring (Mount View High School), Kara Mouyan (Cheltenham High School), Leagh Follington (Hawkesbury High School).

COACH: Mike Corringham. MANAGER: Jeni Fisk

BOYS squad:

Brendan Bradshaw, Jason Donnelly (The Entrance High School), Toby Napper, Tim Brown, Chris Nagle (Shoalhaven High School), Michael Champion (Clare Catholic High School), Andrew Fitzsimon (Lisarow High School), Lee Maslen, Ashley Diable (Colo High School), Simon Wood (Mount View High School).

COACH: Tim Genzo. MANAGER: Therese Kershaw

White Eagles scrape United draw

by Bruce Campbell

WOLLONGONG White Eagles might have looked forward to a bright 1999 season in the Illawarra Credit Union Premier League.

But the prophets of doom and gloom were already afoot even as they unexpectedly toppled Port Kembla in last season's Grand Final.

Given the boot by an ungrateful landlord at Herb Clunies Park after transforming it into a neat and compact sporting venue they were forced to move to Brandon Park after failing to find an alternative venue.

The subsequent suspension from the league for alleged breach of the rules saw the club and ISA in court.

But a double drubbing of the league's executive - they lost both in the Supreme Court and at a NSWST Tribunal - saw the club back on the field.

"We didn't even bother to have a pre-season function," says club stalwart, Michael Prodanovic.

"What was the point, we didn't even know if we would

have a club."

"Our season has really been ruined but the legal part of it isn't over yet.

"We have submitted a claim for our legal costs and are now taking advice on how much we should seek in damages compensation."

And on Saturday at Brandon Park you could have been forgiven for thinking their season would continue in its depressing mode when they faced joint competition leaders Northern United.

They had even lost star player Richard Machado after an ISA tribunal found him guilty of a charge of bringing the game into disrepute and suspended him for six games.

Had the referee included the striking charge in his match report then the player could have been outed for just two weeks.

Little doubt then that club supporters feel that Kangaroo Court justice is prevailing, outraged at what they see as a lack of fair play.

A total of nine players out because of suspension, injury or availability saw them list only two players on the bench

for the match with Northern.

One was a sixteen-year-old and the other was the club's 38-year-old coach..

Northern United, who started without star striker Jamie Closs, who is said to be in dispute with the Corrimal club, had all of the play in the first half.

Playing some dazzling, swift passing football they did everything right - except score.

"We had plenty of possession in the first half," said coach Phil Carr after the game.

"But we just couldn't break them down."

In the second half I changed tactics to a more direct style, getting the players to run at them."

But even that had no effect as Northern blew a series of goal scoring opportunities with shots which shaved the bar, scraped past the upright or were just well off target.

Michael Gardiner should have scored late on in the game when he found himself in open space with the ball at his feet but his shot sailed over the bar.

Peter O'Neill also had his

opportunities but with a mixture of bad luck, atrocious finishing and some stuffy defence the game finished 0-0.

Sixteen-year-old Nicholas Pupovic got on for the last few minutes but the White Eagles youngster didn't have an opportunity to show any of his skill in what was only his second club appearance.

But coach Dragan Kisacchin, pitched in because of the club's dire player availability, showed some of the touches which made him a professional player in Yugoslav First Division football.

Even at 38 he had the ability to hold the ball up and in one terrific move split the normally sound United defence with a slashing pass.

But the usually sound Northern defence was rarely troubled and Stuart Glass and Rod Hill made sure that keeper Adrian Thompson didn't have a single save to make.

Just before the end of the match, proceedings sparked to life when referee Mario Mastroianni, who had a superb match, sent off two players after an on-field scuffle.

Coach Carr was far from

happy in the dressing room after the draw which cost his side a chance to take a clear lead at the top of the table.

"Yes, I'm very disappointed," he said.

"We had enough chances to win easily and there was only ever one team in it."

"But we didn't take our

chances and that is what it's all about."

Wollongong White Eagles have now gone two games with a clean sheet and perhaps the joy expressed at that unconvincing statistic is evidence of just how much their club fortunes have plummeted this season.

Clare slams five

WOLLONGONG weren't the only Illawarra club to be affected by the contentious ruling affecting non ISA registered players. Port Kembla's Michael Clare was forced to miss two weeks after transferring back to the club - and he only moved down the road from Wollongong Wolves.

The highly talented member of the Wolves NSL youth side was only on the field for seconds when he got Port Kembla's first minute opener against Fernhill at Towradgi.

Clare then went on to notch up a total of five as Port Kembla steamrollered Fernhill 7-0.

Club officials confirmed that Clare had been stood down by the ISA while they "sought clarification on the rule".

Last week White Eagles officials demanded the resignation of several ISA directors after they had successfully overturned their suspension at a NSWST Tribunal.

It is certain that the issue is far from finished despite the refusal of the ISA board in accepting the resignations of directors Norman Flanagan, Alan Walton and Robert Fryer.

Facing a huge legal costs and damages bill it could well be that the whole board will ultimately resign.

Meanwhile Port Kembla have re-affirmed that they are still in contention for honours and now sit just outside the Top 4.

Carr to name Illawarra squad

by Bruce Campbell

ILLAWARRA representative coach Phil Carr will name his squad this week for the annual challenge match with the ACT on the Queen's Birthday Monday holiday.

"I'll send the names into the ISA first and then they will release the details after checking availability," he said.

"But things have been a bit of a problem because of the local situation.

"I haven't been able to name a squad and we are obviously not going to be well prepared.

"I would have liked to have included Lupcho Naumovski and Mineo Bonetig but neither is available."

Both players are outstanding and would have normally been automatic starters in Carr's

side.

He has a welcome difficulty in choosing a goalkeeper from Northern United's Adrian Thompson and Port Kembla's Ben Harris.

Both are class keepers.

Wollongong Olympics' gun-striker Anthony Guido should also be a strong contender for a starting spot.

Guido is reputed to be the highest paid player in Illawarra and it would be a major shock if his name was omitted.

Kemblawarra's David Cuda had an excellent season last year for White Eagles and was one of the best players in the Grand Final.

He too should be included and Port Kembla's Matt Callahan and Frank Barila would also be likely contenders.

PORT CHASE ROBERTS

Former midfield star Paul Roberts. Roberts was rated the best player for NSWNS Port Kembla's Canberra Cosmos.

Port Kembla coach Adrian Alston is an old friend of mine. He is still hopeful we will get him at least for a

Steve Krishna (Olympic), Claude Cellini (Olympic), Rodney Hill, Stuart Glass (Northern United) and Rod Patterson (Bulli) are all contenders for a place in what is going to be a very difficult job for Carr given the circumstances.

In Canberra, ACT coach Ian Heywood has no such problems.

The former Cosmos assistant coach has had his squad in training for several months and he is confident of doing well.

"It is the highlight of the year for us," he says, "and all the players are looking forward to the trip.

"At this time of the year it gets a bit cold in Canberra so it makes a pleasant change coming down to the coast. The squad is looking good and I've got two former NSL players available for selection in Gus Cerro and Jason Dunn. They add a touch of class to the team and I think we'll do alright."

Former Port Kembla striker Joe Campagna is a possible inclusion in the ACT line-up. The nippy former NSL player has been playing with Monaro in the Canberra Premier League.



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Sunday 30 May

Coniston Lions v Wollongong Olympic

JJ Kelly Park

Shoalhaven City v Lysaghts

Ison Park, South Nowra



NSW BIG MATCH UPDATE

Parramatta embarrass hapless Canterbury

By Patrick Galloway

MELITA stadium was the venue last Sunday afternoon for the much-anticipated clash between Canterbury-Marrickville and Parramatta in round 17 of the NSW Super League, with both teams in need of three vitally important competition points.

Over the past two weeks, Canterbury Marrickville have conceded an amazing 12 goals, whilst scoring none.

Quite an incredible figure when one realises that Berries keeper Steve Tolios had only seen 18 go past him after 16 matches in the NSW Super League, some two rounds ago.

A demoralising 7 - 0 defeat against Blacktown played a large part in this statistic.

Parramatta's formidable home record is quite tough for any team to overcome, and with keeper Jason Holmes in outstanding form, undoubtedly the Melita faithful would have been relatively confident of a victory.

From the outset it appeared as though the match would be a tight one, with Canterbury-Marrickville looking strongly towards their new signing - Fijian International Esala Masi, to combine well with Nick Bosevski up front.

However, the Berries line up had also been weakened with Adrian Molochino in the grandstand due to his dismissal last start against Blacktown.

Shortly after the Berries came across what was their best chance of the match.

Surprisingly, it was the referee who stole the limelight in the first period, issuing no less than four yellow cards in a space of 20 minutes.

To Diomis' credit however, he was consistent.

The first real chance of the match fell to Canterbury, after some nifty work inside the area by Nick Bosevski, receiving and then dribbling the ball around Parramatta keeper Jason Holmes in what was somewhat of a goal-mouth scramble after receiving a clever through ball from Esala Masi.

Bosevski blasted the ball goalwards only to see it rebound off defender Mark Reveley and then into the path of Canterbury's Simon Fedele, who let go with a lethal shot just outside the box which skimmed the crossbar.

Parramatta replied in the 35th minute after a Hawthornthwaite run from midfield saw him track into the Berries backline without a marker.

Sasha Utjesenovic cleverly played the ball to him from wide on the right.

Hawthornthwaite controlled the ball and then scooted past Canterbury sweeper Terry Palapanis, and with a left foot poke, put the ball low and to the left of Steve Tolios, who up until that point, had not yet been called upon to make a save in the match.

ing work by Grant Bard in the box.

Bard skilfully held the ball up and then laid the ball off to Anderson who was free to guide the ball home, past a frustrated Steve Tolios.

The scoreline became a little more embarrassing for the Berries in the final quarter of an hour, with Adam Anderson picking up his second in the 75th and then Grant Bard converting a penalty in stoppage time for a 5 - 0 end result after a lazy tackle from Canterbury's second half sweeper Matt Percy.

THE top two both won again in Super League round 17 action.

Leaders Blacktown City Demons had a tough game against the improving Leichhardt Tigers, but came away with a 1-0 away victory courtesy of a Jon Angelucci goal.

The Tigers had favourite son John Buonavoglia back at the club after playing for Newcastle Breakers, but he was unable to inspire his team to grab an equaliser.

Bonnyrigg White Eagles keep on winning as well, although for an hour we were looking at the shock result of the season in Super League as lowly Sutherland Sharks led through Craig Hobbs' 44th minute strike.

In the end though, Bonnyrigg ran out 5-1 winners, new signing Joe Bruni and Javier Mancino grabbing two each and Ben Green one.

Macarthur Rams remain in third but they appear to be struggling.

Their latest defeat came at the hands of Bankstown City Lions, who defeated the Rams 2-1 at Jensen Park.

The Lions scored through Dimoski and Mendo Lozevski, while the Rams only goal was an own goal.

The Tigers are in fourth

and Bankstown move into fifth, so Fairfield dropped down to sixth after being surprisingly held at home by bottom club Eastern Suburbs.

The Bulls missed a host of chances and had only a 15th minute penalty to Mark Hoenselaars to show for their efforts. Mark Beldham, who scored his second goal in two games to make it a final score of

1-1, dashed any hopes of that being enough.

The days other game saw Ryde City claim its second win in two games and more clear of the bottom three, after defeating the Central Coast 3-2.

Aydin Cetinay was the hero for the Gunners, netting two of his teams three goals.



Fairfield's prolific scorer Mark Hoenselaars

NSW SOCCER FEDERATION SUPER LEAGUE

ROUND 18

Sunday 30th May

Blacktown City Demons v Ryde City Gunners

Gabbie Stadium, 3:00pm

Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Central Coast

Serbian Centre, 3:00pm

Sutherland Sharks v Bankstown City Lions

Seymour Shaw Field, 3:00pm

Eastern Suburbs v Parramatta Eagles

Wentworth Park, 3:00pm

Leichhardt Tigers v Canterbury Marrickville

Lambert Park, 3:00pm

Tuesday 1st June

Central Coast v Sutherland Sharks

Plum Park, 7:30pm (Round 13 re-arranged game)

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NSWSF STATE LEAGUE ROUND-UP

by Paul Goodwin

IN FIRST Division the top two clubs were both beaten, Manly Warringah surrendering their unbeaten record at Rockdale where the Suns grabbed a last minute winner from Spase Njodoski after Goce Trposki had cancelled out an early headed goal from Danny Barbalace.

St George meanwhile lost valuable ground when a hungrier Stanmore Hawks beat them 1-0 at Arlington Oval, a tap in by Malcolm Adams in the 9th minute being the difference between the sides at the finish.

A C United lost 3-1 at Auburn, but they had led from a Rod Toomey goal only for Auburn to score twice in stoppage time, the first from the spot after the A C keeper had

been sent off, as the scores had been level to that point. Illawarra Lions and Moorebank had a tight contest at Kembla Grange, the home side prevailing 2-1.

Second Division leaders Hajduk Wanderers

dropped a couple of points at home to Arncliffe to stay one point ahead of Saturday's losers Fraser Park, a late Steve Josevski goal earning the visitors a point after J J Ellul had scored early on for Hajduk.

In other games Hurstville ZSC beat Sydney District 6-0 and Greystanes overcame Uni of NSW 2-0 and Hills United and Mount Pritchard played a 2-2 draw at Fred Caterson Reserve Castle Hill.

Blues named squad

The New South Wales Soccer Federation has named a strong squad for the re-arranged ANZAC Cup game against Northern New South Wales to be played on Saturday May 29.

The game was originally washed out on ANZAC Day, but the game will now go ahead on Saturday at Jack McLaughlin Oval.

Kick off is 3:00pm, with the ANZAC Shield

clash between the women's teams kicking off at 1:00pm.

The squad selected by former Socceroo defender Doug Utjesenovic contains just one change to the original squad, Canterbury's Jim Nikas being unavailable, so his place is taken by Parramatta's Ahmed Elrich.

The full squad is: Alex Trposki, Richard Luksic (Bankstown), Borislava Dragas, Paul Richardson,

Robert Gomez (Bonnyrigg), Peter Preston (Central Coast), Frank Mikuletic, Tom Bazdaric (Leichhardt), Matthew Lowe, Jason Bennett (Blacktown), Ahmed Elrich (Parramatta), Matthew Borg (Fairfield), John Crawley, Dion Valle, David Reid, Kain Rastall, Trevor Whiddett (Macarthur Rams), Craig Sharpley (Ryde). Coach - Doug Utjesenovic.



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OTTIE ABONYI - AN AUSSIE LEGEND : Part 6

GREG STOCK concludes his in-depth interview with OTTIE ABONI, one of the fastest players to ever pull on a green and gold shirt - and one of the best.

GS: Are you talking about the ethnic side of the game?

AA: "Well that might come into it too. And of course there's a lot of bickering and in my opinion the game never took the right direction.

"There was too many politics involved in the game.

"I mean back in '74 they said, right from now on soccer is going to kick on - and it just died.

"It just died for the next ten years till something else came along.

"We had a lot of interest shown and a lot of publicity for the first time, good coverage and certain people, I am not going to name names but certain people let it all fade away again with politics and bickering.

"Somebody didn't like somebody or somebody else instead of thinking about the game itself.

"And there was always a lot of personal conflicts and a lot of personal interests that play in front of more important issues.

"That I found at club levels too.

"If you're a wealthy guy and you didn't know nothing about the game it didn't matter who you were the president.

"Only because you had the money not because you were interested in the game or you had some knowledge of the game or you had passion for the game.

"It was because you were well off and that to me is not the way.

"I can say that after twenty years, I have been out of it for nine years now since I've been in Coffs.

"My last years at St George, I went back as Frank's (Arok) assistant at St George in '88 and '89 so I have been through quite a few clubs and I have seen unfortunately the way it's run and you're right, with the ethnic problems too."

GS: You were player coach at Croatia and you finished there in

AA: "'79 as a player coach."

GS: And then where did you go from there?

AA: "Melita.

"I gave away playing and by this time I was thirty three.

"I thought I have had enough and I just now concentrated on purely coaching rather than player coach."

GS: Did you have a lot of success as a coach?

AA: "Well I was at Croatia for three years and player coach for the last two years '78 and '79.

"We won the minor premiership in both those years.

"Then I went to Melita in '80 which was my first year as just a coach not a player.

"We won the minor premiership (but) we lost the grand final.

"So that was three out of three if you like.

"And from there I was offered a full time job at a little club called Riverwood you might remember in the state league.

"That was a case of a lot of things coming together at the time.

"I was working for a sports store in Liverpool with this guy Steven Smith the cricketer and that particular store folded, the company folded, All Round Sports.

"The company folded completely so I lost my job like he (Steven Smith) did and everybody else did.

"And just at that time, honestly I think it might have even been that same week at the end of the '80 season at Melita.

"I mean brilliant, we won the league we won the grand final everything was going well and a brilliant little club, absolutely brilliant club to work for.

"Nice people, good facilities out at Parramatta somewhere there and I had no intention of leaving.

"But Riverwood came along, they used to be called Arncliffe Scots but it was that year that they changed to Riverwood and they offered me a full time job.

"I mean I couldn't believe it.

"I was the only full



Ottie Abonyi with Parliamentarian Al Grassby

time coach in the state league back in those days (laughing).

"So how could you knock it back.

"So I took that on for two years as coach."

"The first year we finished seventh I think and the second we finished runners up to Croatia in fact."

"In fact, I think that was their (Croatia) last year in state league before they went up into the

NSL.

"So we finished second to them on goal difference.

"And I left them and was offered a job in Canberra in '83 in the national league with Canberra City."

GS: Did you have much success down there?

AA: "Well I was only there for one year.

"They offered me a two year contract but I didn't

take it because I still had a house and family in Sydney.

"I moved to Canberra by myself purely to take on this full time coaching job.

"But I couldn't move my family my house and so forth so I said I'll see what happens after one year.

"And when the year was up I think we ended up finishing seventh on the table and there were

fourteen teams in the NSL so halfway.

"It was quite enjoyable, quite good, a fairly successful year.

"They offered me a two year contract.

"Then it was a case of what do I do.

"Do I sell up and move to Canberra or what.

"And that was the year in fact that Croatia came back into the NSL, '84 was going to be their first year in the NSL.



THE CONCLUSION

"So they rang me up while I was still in Canberra (and said) would I be interested in taking Croatia again?

"So I thought what an opportunity - I can come back to Sydney and continue full time coaching.

"I wouldn't have to sell or move.

"So a lot of things happened and I came back and took on Croatia in '84.

"And they sacked me (laughing).

"Typical, halfway through the season we lost a few games on the trot and bang.

"Typical soccer.

"I mean I said to them at the start of the season that here we are playing in the NSL.

"We're going to be playing against teams like St George, Hakoah, APIA who are really established and brilliant teams and they have already been in the NSL since 1977, eight years in the NSL.

"You step up from state league into it.

"(They said) Croatia must finish up the top.

"I said, you're crazy or what."

GS: Too high an expectation?

AA: "I said this will take three years or four years to catch up to these clubs.

"I virtually took on that team with a pure state league squad (with) unknown players.

"Don't get me wrong, they were good players but they were just like Barnsley in the Premier League.

"First year, poor Barnsley, bottom of the table.

"Lucky if you survive.

"If you don't get relegated you're doing well.

"Next year you do a little bit better and again.

"So I said to them it will take time and they said we cannot wait this long what about our supporters.

"And I said well stuff you, let the supporters do the job if that's your attitude.

"So I took it on and of course we lost a couple of games and they sacked me.

"But that's soccer, of course

"Who is to go first - it's always the coach isn't it?"

"So I left it and then I started to be a bit I don't know.

"It's not because I got the bullet, don't get me wrong, it's part of the game but when you give up playing it's never the same."

"Once you stop playing believe me it's not the same."

"Your passion goes, coaching is alright but it's not like being a player."

"And I started to be a bit sceptical (and) about the game, the people running the clubs."

"Because when you are a player you don't give a stuff what the committee says or what they do or what they think (because) you're playing."

"But when you're involved as a coach you go to these meetings, committee meetings and some of the shit anyway I don't want to bore you."

"So that's what happened and the I thought that's it I want a break from soccer for a full year completely."

"So that's when I started working for AMP as a rep selling life insurance."

"Again Mike Johnson got me the job there and I thought I am not going to do anything for a full year."

"And then in '85 Rockdale Ilinden rang me up."

"Would you coach the team? - so I ended up going there."

"Probably one of the silliest mistakes but again I wanted to do it."

"By this time I had a year off and I was starting to

GS: Get itchy feet?

AA: "Yeah itchy feet and I just wanted to be involved and I went along to their little practice ground out at Rockdale."

"So I was there and one thing led to another and Frank Arok got in touch with me and said how would you like to come back to St George."

"And magic, back to my love."

"So in '87 and '88 I was back at St George assisting Frank in the national league."

"So that's basically how I finished up."

GS: And from there St George went out of the National League?

AA: Well I left at the end of '88."

GS: And then you moved to Coffs Harbour.

AA: "That's right."

"I went to see Frank at the end of the year and I said we decided to move up north and I am leaving."

"And that was the end of my soccer days."

GS: And you're enjoying

your soccer retirement up there?

AA: "I love it."

"Lifestyle is absolutely perfect, it's what we like and I'm now involved in things like golf."

"I'm now a bloody golf fanatic for the last four years."

GS: Golf is a bit like an addiction sometimes.

AA: "It is, very much so."

"Well I decided I'm 51 now so I thought when I come up here I want to do things I have never had the chance to do."

"When you're working and playing soccer, training three or four nights per week plus every weekend you've got no time for anything else."

"So I thought once I come up here the lifestyle is entirely different."

"I mean the first year I was up here would you believe I ended up playing soccer for a little club called Sawtell up here."

GS: You actually played?

AA: "I actually played."

"It was nine years ago so I would have been forty two."

"Things like that and

club for two years, North Coffs, and then he was director of coaching up here for about three years and last year he just packed it up completely."

"Again, politics."

"Certain guys didn't want him in the job."

GS: They used to call him Sabrina because he was like a ballet dancer with the ball?

AA: "Yeah, Sabrina that's right."

"Unbelievable, the Little Professor."

"I've got his book too called the Little Professor."

GS: Has he signed it for you?

AA: "Oh yeah, he did of course."

"He wouldn't be more than seven minutes in the car from my place to his place."

"So I see quite a bit of him and his wife."

"We've been there for a barbecue, they come to our place occasionally and we get on real well."

GS: So who would have been the best player you played with?

AA: "You can pick a few."

AA: "To play with I'd have to mention Johnny Warren of course."

"For again a lot of reasons, his leadership of course, his skills and ability, but more so his leadership and determina-

tion and he possessed so much skill."

"It's a pity that all his life he was a right full-back which I thought was probably the wrong position for him."

"He just had so much skill that he would have been a better player of course."

"Very creative, very skilful, read the game perfectly and we had brilliant understanding so I enjoyed playing with him more than anybody else, actually playing with him."

"Those two would have to stand out in my mind and Adrian Alston up front."

"Probably those three I would have to mention."

GS: What about the hardest defender?

AA: "Stan Ackerley without a doubt, the bastard (laughing)."

"I'll never forget when I was playing in Melbourne as a young lad of sixteen or seventeen he played for a club called Slavia."

"I'll never forget the first game I actually

back and I was right wing and a skinny little boy at seventeen year old."

"He said these exact words - I am gonna' break your leg before this day is out."

"Just then I sh*t myself but that was a put-off of course, but he was by far the hardest defender I've faced."

"But they are all hard, let's face it."

"As a forward you find every defender hard."

GS: Coaches - Frank Arok the best you have played under?

AA: "Yes by far."

GS: Even better than Rale Rasic? I guess its like comparing chalk and cheese

AA: "I wouldn't say by a mile, but Frank and Rale those two in particular."

"I've had quite a few over the years, but yeah Frank and Rale."

"Those two would have to stand out more than anybody else."

GS: Do you have any regrets on your career at all?

"Have you noticed that."

surprise you."

"I mean when I started playing soccer I only thought about the next Saturday's game."

"If you get selected to play for your club side at first grade level or New South Wales or Victoria it's an extra added bonus."

"You're not going to think about it from the age of ten."

"You know I never thought I'd play for Australia, that was never my ambition."

"My ambition was to be a good player end of story."

"If you are good enough or lucky enough to get picked it was unbelievable but I never thought at the age of ten one day I'd like to play for Australia."

"And I honestly don't think anybody could."

"It sounds silly and a lot of people sort of look at me and say that's not right."

"But people will always say that once they've made it."

"Have you noticed that."

"It's always when a guy makes the Australian team in any sport he says, oh one day I had a dream that one day I might like to play for Australia."

"But you never hear a guy who never made it say, geez one day I want to play for Australia."

"That's what fascinates me."

"I just think it's not possible."

"I think if you love the game and you're good enough and you work hard enough you'll get the benefits out of it."

"You'll play for Australia but you can't actually dream about it."

"I just don't believe it's possible."

"Even Bobby Charlton said the same thing."

"I've got a video where he's actually talking about that."

"He said maybe I should never have even been picked for England."

"Now fancy him saying it, he played for England one hundred and six times."

"But he said 'I was dead lucky to have been picked for England. All I wanted to do was play for Man United' and he said all of a sudden I got picked for England."

"I don't know whether I deserved it or not."

"Now fancy him saying that."

"And he's the only guy I've ever heard that said exactly what I always thought."



The great Leo Baumgartner

"Well the reason for that is certain guys found out that I was moving up here."

"Leo Baumgartner was already here for a full year before I moved up."

GS: Is he still coaching up there?

AA: "No, but he was."

"He actually coached a

he's a mate of mine."

"Incredible."

"If you had to ask me who in your opinion (was) the best player to play in this country or import if you like (it's Leo Baumgartner).

"But Leo, I have seen him play and he was unbelievable."

tion."

"An example to all of us as a player, I mean he was just a 110% player."

"So it's a combination of a number of things."

"Another guy would be Doug Utjesenovic the right fullback (for St George and Australia) because him and I had brilliant understandings

played against him I didn't even know who the hell he was."

"(We were) playing at Port Melbourne, I don't remember what year it was I'd have to think about it, (but) he said to me even before the game kicked off when we were lining up, he just looked at me, he was left full-

AA: "Oh no, not at all."

"No, I am very, very grateful and very lucky at the same time."

"You know how you hear players saying ever since I was a kid I dreamed of playing for Australia."

"To me that's such bullshit."

"Now again that might

ASICS BIG MATCH UPDATE: NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

Dusty gets Golden Goal

By Roy Hay

ADELAIDE City beat Carlton by a golden goal scored by Dusty McGregor in the second period of extra-time after the teams had been locked at nil-all at the end of normal time in the Inter-Divisional Play-off in Adelaide on Sunday.

Carlton had much of the play, but could not break through on the heavy pitch.

For Carlton, Serdar Pir, Steve Martin and Marko Iacobaccia were the best on the day.

Adelaide City will now go on to meet the AIS in the National Play-off next week, possibly as the curtain raiser to the Ericsson Cup Grand Final at Bob Jane Stadium on Sunday.

THE AIS and Sydney Olympic could not be separated in normal and extra-time of the Northern Division Grand Final at Marconi Stadium on Sunday and the match had to be decided on penalties.

Olympic had the upper hand in the last few minutes of the

game.

Jim Bakis and Nick Carle came very close to scoring, but when these chances were missed it was down to the penalty shoot out.

Jim Kourtis saved the first AIS kick.

Michael Turnbull, who had been outstanding in goal during the game for the AIS, then saved three penalty kicks to see his team through as Wayne Shroj, Ljubo Milicevic and finally Elias Dimourtzidis converted their kicks for the AIS.

Olympic had the upper hand in the last few minutes of the game.

National Youth League:
Inter-Divisional Play-off
Sunday 23 May 1999
Adelaide City 1 Carlton 0
(Dusty McGregor)
(Score at full time, 0-0, McGregor's goal was a golden goal in the second period of extra-time)

Northern Division
Grand Final
Sunday 23 May 1999
Sydney Olympic 0 AIS 0
(After extra-time, AIS won 3-2 on penalty kicks)

Forthcoming match
National Play-off
Sunday 30 May 1999



Jimmy Kourtis: the Olympic keeper had a fine game but the AIS got through on penalties and will now meet Adelaide City in Sunday's Grand Final.

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ASICS BIG MATCH UPDATE: NSL TOP SIX SERIES

Sydney United march on to Grand Final showdown

By Ted Simmons

SYDNEY United newcomers Mile Sterjovski and Steve Berry tore Perth Glory apart at Marconi Stadium on Sunday to book a place in the National Soccer League Grand Final.

Goals in each half gave United a 2-1 win in the Ericsson Cup preliminary final to line up another match against defending champion South Melbourne next Sunday.

Sterjovski, Berry and Joel Griffiths were all playing their first full season with United after being signed from New South Wales State League clubs.

A wonderful moment of evasive skill from Sterjovski in the 13th minute after a pin-

that would have sent the match into extra time.

"I thought we had it sewn up and the game was dead and buried until they scored," United coach David Mitchell said.

"It was a reminder of our last game against them when we lost 4-3 in the final minutes and it was a credit to the players to come through in such style."

United, apart from patches by Glory, had the better of the game using a strong midfield and the speed of their youthful front line.

Co-striker Nathan Day hit the post in the 25th minute also hit the cross bar with a first time shot 14 minutes from fulltime.

Substitute Con Boutsianis gave Glory a chance to get

SYDNEY UNITED 2 (Sterjovski, Berry)
PERTH GLORY 1 (Boutsianis)
Venue: Edensor Park
Man of the Match: Nathan Day SUTD



point pass from Berry gave United an early lead.

Sterjovski outpaced defender Gianfranco Circati, cut infield and beat keeper Tony Franken with a shot which glanced off the keeper's body.

Griffiths started the movement which led to the 71st minute second goal when he raced down the left and crossed deep to the unmarked Berry whose angled drive hit the far post and bounced in.

Perth had started in rousing style, forcing three corners in the opening two minutes as the ball was desperately cleared off the line.

The Glory staged a similar finish in the final 10 minutes in trying to peg back the goals

back five minutes before the whistle when he was left alone wide of the goal and placed a left foot shot past keeper Mike Gibson.

But the attempted comeback suffered a serious blow when keeper Franken was sent off after charging outside his area to stop a solo run by flying United winger Danny Townsend.

"The party is over. It was a good result for us after three years and we are now the third best team in the country," said Glory coach Bernd Stange.

"Sydney United were faster, fresher and fitter and after the first 15 minutes we lost concentration.

"We tried everything with

our changes but were not strong enough."

Mitchell replaced Sterjovski after he suffered a knock midway through the second half with Griffiths who also needed treatment after an early tackle.

The United defence, again led capably by Velimir Kupresak and Richard Plesa apart from early nerves recovered strongly to hold out the Glory attack until the final few minutes.

Stange said that United was the better team and deserved to be in the Grand Final against South Melbourne but could not select which team was likely to win.

Inside Soccer READERS' NSL AWARDS

Nominate your favourite players for our READERS' NSL POLL. Winners will be calculated on the basis of 8 points for a first selection, 5 for a second selection and 3 for a third selection.

Send as many as you like – and the winners will be announced in our June 8 issue.

BEST PLAYER

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

BEST ROOKIE PLAYER*

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

* Under 21 player in his first ever NSL season.

BEST GOALKEEPER

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

BEST UNDER 21 PLAYER

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SIDELINE VIEW

United turn on some dazzling football

by Bruce Campbell

IF THE 1999 Top Six series had been disappointing to date for football connoisseurs then this match changed all that.

In the early stages Perth Glory looked likely to run rampant but they strangely faded out.

With the United midfield of Berry, Burns and Bennett taking charge for large parts of the game the way was paved for the youthful legs of first Day and Sterjovski and finally Griffiths to run Perth ragged.

At times Perth looked ordinary and had Nathan Day en-

joyed a spot of luck then United could have finished up winning by four or five clear goals.

But as so often happens when you fail to take your chances something comes out to haunt you.

For Perth that was in the shape of substitute Con Boutsianis.

Late in the game he smashed a vicious shot at goal which was well saved by United keeper Mike Gibson.

Had it gone in then it would have changed the complexion of the game, what was his first goal would have been the

equaliser.

That was well set up by another sub, John Markowski whose precision left foot cross was just pure class.

In fact, most of the class in the Glory side came from the two bench players although Alistair Edwards worked tirelessly.

The referee was spot on when he red carded Tony Franken, after the Perth keeper slid out of his seat and then stuck his arm out to prevent a goal bound ball.

United were a far better winner than the one goal margin would suggest.

SCOREBOARD

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NSW SUPER LEAGUE

FIRST GRADE	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Blacktown City	17	12	2	3	37	14	38
Bonnyrigg	17	12	1	4	52	27	37
Macarthur Rams	17	10	1	6	30	20	31
Leichhardt Tigers	17	9	2	6	33	25	29
Bankstown City Lions	17	9	1	7	35	27	28
Fairfield Bulls	17	8	4	5	31	29	28
Parramatta Eagles	16	8	2	6	35	20	26
Canterbury Marrickville	17	7	4	6	24	30	25
Ryde City	16	4	4	8	23	27	16
Central Coast	15	2	3	10	14	35	9
Eastern Suburbs	16	2	2	12	20	47	8
Sutherland Sharks	16	2	2	12	15	46	8

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

UNDER 21	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Parramatta Eagles	16	11	3	2	37	19	36
Macarthur Rams	17	10	3	4	41	20	33
Bonnyrigg	17	11	0	6	35	23	33
Fairfield Bulls	17	9	3	5	32	33	30
Blacktown City	17	9	1	7	39	31	28
Eastern Suburbs	16	8	1	7	28	28	25
Leichhardt Tigers	17	7	1	9	34	33	22
Central Coast	16	6	4	6	23	27	22
Ryde City	16	4	4	8	21	26	16
Canterbury Marrickville	17	4	3	10	17	30	15
Sutherland Sharks	17	4	2	11	17	37	14
Bankstown City Lions	17	3	3	11	21	38	12

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

UNDER 18	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pt
Blacktown City	17	12	3	2	36	15	39
Parramatta Eagles	16	12	1	3	56	15	37
Macarthur Rams	17	11	1	5	32	23	34
Canterbury Marrickville	17	9	4	4	32	22	31
Leichhardt Tigers	17	8	4	5	21	16	28
Central Coast	16	7	2	7	25	23	23
Eastern Suburbs	16	7	2	7	26	25	23
Sutherland Sharks	17	5	3	9	19	32	18
Ryde City	16	3	5	8	13	22	14
Bonnyrigg	17	2	5	10	10	30	11
Fairfield Bulls	17	1	3	13	1147	6	6

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

P	W	D	L	F	A	PT	
Pt. Melbourne	16	11	4	1	41	18	37
Preston Lions	16	10	2	4	34	20	32
Green Gully Caval'Rs	16	8	6	2	29	17	30
Fawkner Blues	16	8	3	5	27	18	27
Bulleen Inter Kings	16	6	5	5	22	18	23
Melbourne Raiders	15	6	4	5	21	24	22
Altona Magic	16	6	3	7	21	31	21
Bentleigh Greens	15	5	5	5	27	17	20
Altona East Phoenix	16	5	4	7	17	23	19
South Dandenong	16	4	5	7	26	28	17
St. Albans Saints	16	5	2	9	17	24	17
Westvale	16	3	6	7	20	35	15
Spring. White Eagles	16	3	4	9	19	29	13
Sunshine Georgies	16	3	3	10	17	36	12

SCHOOLS

COMMONWEALTH BANK CUP:

Rd 1	Killara 1
Turramurra 3	Killara 1
Cromer 3	Beacon Hill 2
Ashfield Boys 4	Balmain 0
Narara Valley 6	Kincumber 2
Northlakes 3	Berkeley Vale 0
Gosford 6	Wyong 2
Lisarow 3	Gorokan 2
Asquith 4	Kuring-gai 1
Cherrybrook 3	Galston 2
The Forest 4	Balgowlah 2
Rd 2:	
Bossley Park 5	Fairfield 0
Elizabeth Macarthur 6	James Meehan 2
Sefton 2-4	Lurnea 2-3
Birrong Boys 8	James Busby 2
Ambarvale 2	Casula 0
Robert Townson 8	Prairiewood 3
St Johns Park 2	Miller 1
James Cook BHS 3	Kirrawee HS 2
Rd 3:	
Asquith BHS 1	Cherrybrook HS 1 (on penalties)
SHIELD:	
Rd 3:	
Pennant Hills 1	Cheltenham 0
The Entrance 3	Narara Valley 1
Albury 4	Barham 0
Wade 8	Griffith 0
Cootamundra 4	Tumut 0
Kooringal 3	Wagga Wagga 0.
METROPOLITAN CATHOLIC COLLEGES (NSW)	
Rd 4 A:	
Marist Kogarah 0	CBHS Lewisham 0
DLS Ashfield 5	Marist North Shore 1
St Leo's Wahroonga 2	Marist Pagewood 1, La Salle Bankstown 2
Marcellin Randwick 2	Marcellin Randwick 2
Marist Kogarah 1	CBHS Lewisham 1
DLS Ashfield 4	Marist North Shore 0,
St Leo's Wahroonga 1	Marist Pagewood 1.
U-15:	
Marist Kogarah 3	CBHS Lewisham 0
DLS Ashfield 1	Marist North Shore 0,
Marist Pagewood 2	St Leo's Wahroonga 0,
La Salle Bankstown 4	Marcellin Randwick 0.
BILL TURNER CUP	
Rd 1:	
Marist Pagewood 4	J J Cahill 0
Castle Hill 3	Model Farms 0
Malvina 3	Turramurra 0
Hawkesbury 3	Wimalee 1
Quakers Hill 3	St Andrew College 0
DLS Ashfield 4	Homebush Boys 1
O'Connor 3	The Armidale School 0,
Trinity Lismore 8	Richmond River 0,
Ballina 5	Southern Cross 3
John Paul College 8	Belmont Christian 2
Bishop Druitt 5	Coffs Harbour 0,
Taree 4	Christ Community 2,
Winham 2	Kendall 2
Lake Macquarie 4	Gloucester 1
Cardiff 4	Whitebridge 3
Hunter Sports 3	St Pius X 3
Toronto 6	Belmont Christian 2
Monya 4	St Pauls Booragoon 0,
St Joes Albion Park 7	Batemans Bay 3
Balaclava 1	Hay 0
Deniliquin 5	Barham 0
Rd 2:	
Endeavour 5	Port Hacking 0
James Cook Boys 2	Caringbah 1
Kingsgrove 1	Kingsgrove North 0,
Randwick Boys 4	Sydney Boys 0
Narrabeen 3	Beacon Hill 2
Oakhill College 3	William Clarke College 0
Epping Boys 1	Asquith Boys 0
St Columbas 8	Cambridge Park 1, Cranbrook 4
Dulwich 2	St Pauls Pearin 2, Canterbury Boys 6

ACT

Premier League Division 1:	
First Grade	
Capital City Suns 2	Weston Creek 4
Juventus 2	Burns Club 1
Belconnen United 1	Canberra Olympic 0
Monaro 5	Uni of Canberra 2
Canberra Deakin 6	Queanbeyan City 0
Under 23s	Queanbeyan City 0
Capital City Suns 1	Weston Creek 2
Juventus 2	Burns Club 3
Belconnen United 2	Canberra Olympic 2
Monaro 2	Uni of Canberra 1
Canberra Deakin 7	Queanbeyan City 0
UNDER 19s	Weston Creek 2
Capital City Suns 0	Burns Club 0
Juventus 5	Canberra Olympic 0
Belconnen United 8	Uni of Canberra 3
Monaro 0	Queanbeyan City 1
Premier League Division 2:	
1st Grade:	
ADFA 1	Canberra Sabres 1,
ANU 0	O'Connor Knights 1,
Belwest Foxes 4	Cooma 0
Tuggeranong Utd 1	White Eagles 1
Res Grade:	
ANU 1	O'Connor Knights 3,
Belwest Foxes 11	Cooma 0
Tuggeranong Utd 5	White Eagles 2
State League:	
Division 1:	
Ginninderra 1	ANU 1
Burns 2	Monaro 5
Southern Spirit 2	Uni of Canberra 2,
Valley Blues 1	Belconnen 5
Division 2:	
Burns 1	Juventus 2
Ginninderra 5	ANU 1
Tuggeranong 2	Uni of Canberra 4

STOP PRESS

The Back Page

Strange warns SA; lift your game

By Ted Simmons

PERTH Glory coach Bernd Strange today warned Australian soccer officials to lift their game before the Sydney Olympics next year.

Strange was upset after midfielder Craig Deans was badly injured in the Ericsson Cup preliminary final against Sydney United at Marconi Stadium and was unable to get quick treatment.

Deans suffered a badly dislocated left shoulder in a clash with United defenders in the 30th minute and was left on the ground while ground officials tried to find a stretcher. He finally had to be assisted from the ground by two officials and was taken to the dressing room where he had a further wait before he could be taken to hospital.

"With the Olympics in 15 months it is wrong not to have a stretcher for an injured player," said the German born mentor. "It looked like amateur soccer. I am a professional coach and cannot understand this."

Deans was on the ground for nearly three minutes before he could be moved and finally replaced by Danny Hay.

"Australian soccer needs to become a little more professional and with better marketing maybe then it will have a big future but at present it is only mid-class," said Strange. "Its results have been poor and Australia did not play in the World Cup. It has been described as a sleeping giant and has big potential but results are important."



Red Devils: you can quote that

THE mighty Manchester United are on their way to Australia - with another big time date at the European Cup final on Wednesday first.

Victory in the European Cup will give the Red devils an historic treble after they completed their third League and Cup double of the decade by defeating Newcastle United 2-0 at Wembley on Saturday.

INCLUDED in this Back Page tribute to the reds are some memorable British press quotes over the last

day or two:

"It's fantastic - three Doubles in five years. The boys were marvellous." - Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson.

"We were punished for our mistakes. We were pushing, pushing, pushing but you can't afford to make mistakes. In the end we had to be thankful they did not get three, four or five (goals)." - Newcastle manager Ruud Gullit.

"It's amazing how this game changes around. One minute

you are down, the next you are up. I was devastated not to be picked. I'm 33 now and you don't think you're going to get another chance." - goalscorer and man of the match Teddy Sheringham.

"I have got to be professional about this. The game on Wednesday is so very important that I can't let this go to my head." - Peter Schmeichel.

"United are the benchmark and we've got to be as good as them. I hope they do the treble now." - Newcastle's Gary



Bernd finishes his season with a party

PERTH Glory were determined to party last Sunday night regardless of their defeat by Sydney United.

Glory coach Bernd Strange said everything was a bonus for his men and they aimed to savour the moment at Marconi Stadium, no matter what.

"We've done what we expected to do this season and more, we aimed for the Top Six and we've already done better than that," Strange said before the vital match.

"We will be having a party if we win or lose."

Glory has never played in the finals before and Strange could justifiably stamp "mission accomplished" on this season's file.

Despite United not having won against Perth in Sydney since 1996 the westerners went into the game as underdogs.

The Preliminary Final was a superb game which was watched by a disappointingly small crowd.

Once again the match was shown on a two hour delayed broadcast around the country and that, plus some overcast weather, affected what should have been a capacity crowd.

Both Perth and United have had excellent seasons and Glory coach Bernd Strange has been a revelation in his first season.

He is likely to be up against United's avid Mitchell again in a few week's time when the pair are almost certain to be nominees for the NSL Coach of the Year award.

The award is voted on by other NSL coaches and the general feeling in the industry is that Mitchell has the slight edge on his more experienced rival, a former East German national team boss.

Speed.

"Roll on Wednesday. I have sympathy for Newcastle. It's two years on the trot at Wembley with nothing to show for it." - former Magpie Andy Cole

"The substitution made it for us, but the squad is what it is all about. The whole squad deserve the credit. I just pray

we can win on Wednesday." - Manchester's Roy Keane, taken off injured after eight minutes.

"It wasn't the best of goals, I didn't hit it too well but it went in, thankfully." - second goal scorer Paul Scholes.

"I've just enjoyed the season. This tops it all off for me. You

play hoping to finish up with something and we've got two trophies now." - David Beckham.

"All along we have said the other games are important but Wednesday really is the big one for us. We couldn't go into the game with any more confidence after winning the championship and the Cup." - Gary Neville.